

# THE BEACON



A PAPER FOR THE SUNDAY SCHOOL  
AND THE HOME



VOLUME II.

SUNDAY, APRIL 21, 1912

NUMBER 30

## Little Brown Hands.

MARY HANNAH KROUT.

They drive home the cows from the pasture,  
Up through the long shady lane,  
Where the quail whistles loud in the wheat-  
fields

That are yellow with ripening grain;  
They find, in the thick, waving grasses—  
Where the scarlet-lipped strawberry grows;  
They gather the earliest snowdrops,  
And the first crimson buds of the rose.

They toss the new hay in the meadow;  
They gather the elder-bloom white;  
They find where the dusky grapes purple  
In the soft-tinted October light;  
They know where the apples hang ripest,  
And are sweeter than Italy's wines;  
They know where the fruit hangs the thickest  
On the long, thorny blackberry vines.

They gather the delicate seaweeds,  
And build tiny castles of sand;  
They pick up the beautiful seashells—  
Fairy barks that have drifted to land;  
They wave from the tall, rocking treetops  
Where the oriole's hammock-nest swings;  
And at night-time are folded in slumber  
By a song that a fond mother sings.

Those who toil bravely are strongest;  
The humble and poor become great;  
And so from these brown-handed children  
Shall grow mighty rulers of state.  
The pen of the author and statesman—  
The noble and wise of the land—  
The sword, and the chisel, and palette,  
Shall be held in the little brown hand.

## The Midnight Race.

BY ARTHUR WALLACE PEACH.

*In Two Parts. Part II.*

They whirled at his word, and started across the flat. A soft, encouraging cheer rose from the crowd behind them. Across the moonlit level the white figures in the running suits went gleaming, Stafford leading with his graceful, perfectly timed stride, the other three grouped close behind him, then the slim figure of Leighton last, running with an odd but strangely easy stride.

By the silent, moon-white baseball field, the tennis courts, they passed quickly, then turned into the road through the woods. It was dark there, so dark that Stafford was forced to slow down the pace and go carefully. The road was rough, too, full of projecting roots, loose stones, and hollows.

"This is fierce!" Webster grunted.



THE BOY WITH A TORN HAT.—THOMAS SULLY

Copyright, 1910, Emery School-Art Co.

"Dry up, Sam. Save your wind," Stafford snapped.

Silence fell save for the noise of the shoe spikes clinking against stone, the movement of arms against bodies, and the sound of regular breathing.

Stafford did his best to lead where the

footing was good, but his care amounted to little. Where the moonlight shone through, he could see easily, but the trees were thick and closely overhung the road, and they were forced, now and then, to drop into a walk or wander from the road.

They had gone hardly half-way up the



dark road when Stafford's heart jumped at the sound of some one's falling behind him. A quick gasp followed, and a voice came back to them with almost a sob in it. "I'm done, fellows—my game ankle—go ahead—good luck!"

Webster was out of the race.

Stafford shut his teeth tightly, and ran more carefully; an ankle wrenched would mean failure. But the village must be reached; they were racing for what might save the life of a man in distress. And one of them must get there, and *he* would be that one.

When he saw the darkness open suddenly ahead, he knew they must be nearing the regular traveled road upon which the camp road opened. They swept up a slight rise out of the close darkness, and on to the smoother road.

Just at the turn Haines, slender of build, fast in the one hundred yard dash and hurdles, but not strong with the energy needed in the strain of long-distance running, fell out. "I can't do it, Staff—it's too much," he moaned in despair, wavering in his stride, and slipped over into the roadside grass.

Picking his place just outside the wheel-rut, Stafford started off easily. A sort of almost savage joy thrilled through him. Not a kink could he feel in his muscles anywhere. He could run clear to the end, and he knew it! When in college what a yarn he would have to tell of that night's race! Then he remembered Leighton, and a little flare of anger heated him. He would show Field and Leighton that he knew what he was talking about. He glanced back.

On one side of the road, almost abreast of him, short, stocky, gritty little Smith was jogging away steadily. Where was Leighton? Perhaps he had given up long ago, Stafford thought. But, looking farther back, he saw him in the middle of the road where the footing was roughest, his long white legs shooting back and forth, back and forth, with a peculiar, wide-knee action.

Smiling to himself, Stafford settled down to work.

They mounted the long slope. The road stretched grayish white ahead of them; beside them the fields slept whitely beneath the moonlight; a herd of cows near the fence stared at them in dumb amazement; a wondering, belated farmer hurled questions at them that were not answered—breath was too precious to use in replying.

At the top of the slope they could look far down over the valley to the ridge where the white steeple of the village church shone in the silver light. A little way it would be down grade, then the long flat, a rise, a hill, and the last hard climb up to the village.

The thought of the last brought Stafford to a realization of the great task still ahead of them. He thought of the camp where he knew there would be little sleeping that night; he thought of the confidence the boys had in him as a result of his many victories; and how sure they would be that he would reach the village anyway. But a sense of fear came over him as he realized, too, that his stride was wavering a bit, the muscles of his calves were letting his heels down hard, now and then. The knowledge angered him, and he increased his speed as if to convince himself that he was mistaken.

He drew ahead of the others rapidly. An odd stumbling sound reached him; and, glancing back, he saw a figure sprawled in

the road, then another stop, and go down. "Both of them!" His voice rang out aloud and almost triumphantly.

The thought that it was he now, *he* who must do it all, filled him with new courage; he quickened his stride, and picked up speed under the stimulus of the thought.

But he quickly slowed down again, remembering there was still the hill beyond the valley, then the abrupt rise to the flat where the village lay; and, if he did not make it, Dr. Stetson would wait in vain for the precious medicine.

Coming to the hill, he changed his stride to a short jog, but his toes could not hold his weight when carried well forward, and he decided to walk a little. Hardly had he gone more than a few steps when he felt a twinge of pain that signalled cramps in his calves. It startled him into action, for he knew he must keep the warm blood moving, and he bent all his will in the effort of advancing. Slowly but surely toward the top he forged, beyond which lay the slope where he could save his strength for the last climb.

He made the crest of the hill, but, as he started forward down the slope, his ankles seemed to suddenly weaken. He ground his jaws in determination, but the fagged muscles could not obey the command of his will. On the other hill the white steeple seemed to beckon him; in his hand was the precious paper, and he the only one—he must.

He must! he must! over again he repeated it. He steeled himself for the effort, but the endurance, the skill, the fleetness that had carried him swiftly, surely, gloriously to victories on the cinder track was failing under the long strain of the rough road work. His knees wobbled, his ankles turned; he was failing, and none but he left! He swayed on a little distance, breathing hard, and dropped upon a slight bank at the roadside. He pounded and rubbed the tired muscles with his fists, but they had done all they could do. He tried to start again, but slid back; it was no use, and he knew it. He bent his head and fought the tears back. If it had only been a mile or two, and level! He thought of the Camp, of Fred, of the doctor depending upon him. Desperately he tried again, but it was useless. He threw himself back into the thick, soft grass.

Far up the road came a soft mush! mush! He raised his head. Straight down the middle of the road a white figure was coming, a slim, shadowy figure; back and forth, back and forth, steadily and tirelessly as a pendulum the white legs were swinging; back and forth, back and forth, the knees coming straight out, not lifted high.

A cry left Stafford's lips. The figure stopped short, breathing hard, but not with the gasp or whistling sound of a runner far spent.

"You—Leighton!"

"Yes, Smith cut his head bad when he fell. I stopped to help him. I supposed you'd"—the quiet voice hesitated. "Anything I can do for you?"

"No—I'm out of it—take this." Stafford pressed the packet into Leighton's hand. "Go on! you can't do anything for me," he said bitterly. "I simply didn't have the stuff in me—and I was so sure! I'm a rotten failure, that's all." His voice trembled.

Leighton hesitated as if to say something,

but Stafford's head was bowed as if to imply that there was nothing more to be said, and Leighton went on.

Stafford glanced up as he left, and watched the white figure fade into the gray, moonlit distance of the still country road, and continued watching long after Leighton had passed from view. Then, again, he turned over, and buried his face in his arms.

After a while he roused himself, and crawled from the roadside back further into the thicket to get away from the slight coolness of the evening air. He sat there, brooding and thinking thoughts not all pleasant; wondering, too, if Leighton would reach the village; stifling quickly the first evil hope that he would not, and praying that he would.

He watched and listened, looked up the silent road, gazed across the valley at the white steeple that still seemed beckoning him. If Leighton should weaken on that last hard climb—he drove the thought from his mind.

Minutes seemed to race into hours; a chill of fear was in his heart, when he heard soft in the distance the sound of a carriage coming fast. It was far away, seemingly, but soon it whirled into view down the gray vista of the road, and came plunging and swaying up. In it he saw two figures, one white and one dark.

It swept up to him. He saw the white figure rise and leap far out from the speeding carriage that did not pause.

The figure came up—Leighton again. "I got there, Staff, and that fellow's going with the stuff. Isn't there something I can do for you, rub you?" he asked earnestly, in his voice no ill-will, just an anxious friendliness.

Stafford choked as he started to speak, and paused. "Nothing—you can do for me—except—except—forget—those—things I said to you. I'm downright sorry—that's all—so blamed sorry I could"—His voice broke, and he simply held out his hand.

Leighton's thin hand grasped it tightly. "It's all right, Staff; I didn't blame you. Anyway, we're friends from now, and we've got all summer ahead. You can help me, too, in racing; I need coaching. But you see on father's farm I had to carry milk every evening to a family two miles from us, and I got into the habit of jogging back, until I could do it in the dark fairly fast; so I'm used to ruts and stones, but on a real track you'd beat"—

Stafford put his hand on the other's shoulder, and his voice was full of feeling. "Don't say another word, old chap! You can run now—I tell you that! But I'll do what you ask; and say—you work up the long-distance running; I'll work up the dashes, the hundred yard, and the hurdles; then—won't we land a few victories for the old Camp—I guess yes!"

There is a ship named Sometime;

Men dream of it and wait;

One on the shore, impatient,

One at the household gate,

Thinking: "If it come not in the morn,

Then in the evening it may."

But one I knew, not thinking of ships,

Worked till the close of the day;

Lifting his eyes at evening time,

There his ship at anchor lay.

IRENE HARDY.



For The Beacon.

## The Dickens Hen.

BY JENNIE G. WALKER.

No one who saw her industriously scratching for seeds and worms in Dan's garden would have thought that Muffles was a literary hen. Her modest costume of gray and white, with black trimmings, was always neatly arranged, and she never neglected her domestic duties. It was, in fact, her success in bringing up large families to the age of tender frying that determined her career.

The garden which seemed to Muffles the most desirable spot on earth, and where she spent all the time that Nora and Dan would allow her, overlooked beautiful Lake Superior, and lay at the edge of what had been a pine forest. Tall, blackened tree trunks with queer beckoning arms showed how large the trees had grown before the great fire swept down to the lake shore.

Twelve-year-old Nora remembered how, two years before, the fire crackled and puffed through the forest before it reached their little house between the trees and the lake. All night long they listened to the terrible sound of great trees falling, and the next morning all the family, Father, Mother, big brother Dan, and little Nora, carried furniture from the house to a sheltered spot under the edge of a cliff. Then suddenly Father told Nora to go and sit quietly in the same protected place. As she ran along the path, almost blinded by the smoke, she stumbled over a bunch of white and gray feathers and stopped to pick up a frightened little hen. Then she sat down in her safe corner and forgot part of her troubles as she petted the tiny creature fluttering in her arms.

"I wonder why no one ever thought to give you a name, pretty hen," she whispered, "I am going to call you Muffles because you are so soft and cosy and comforting."

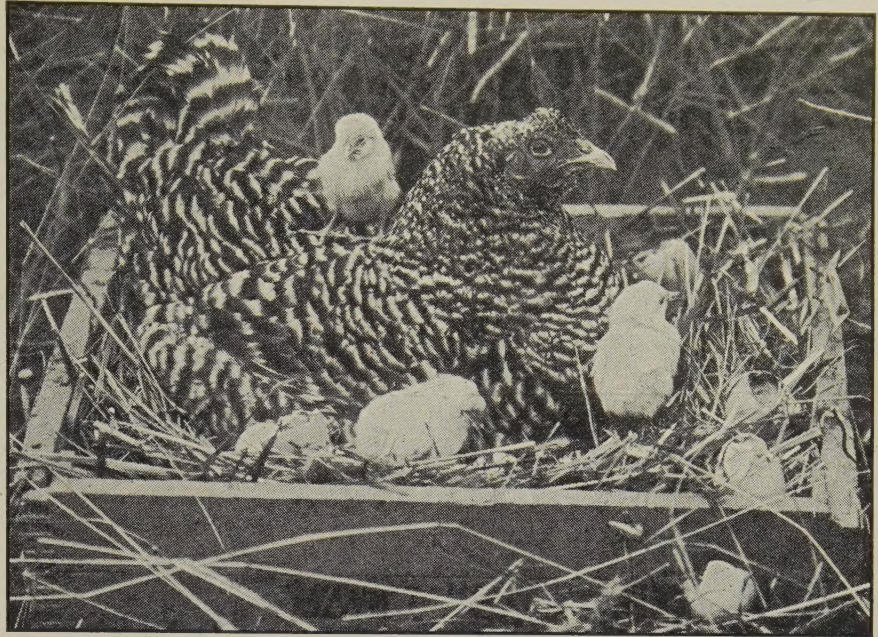
While Nora and Muffles comforted each other, Father and Mother and Dan fought in vain to save the house. Nora heard Dan's happy shout when the wind changed before the other buildings were harmed, and a little later Father came limping down to the beach, his poor feet terribly burned and his face so blistered she scarcely knew him.

Nora never realized the discouragements of the long winter that followed, for Father and Mother always told how many things they had to be thankful for. Best of all, they said, Father's burns would be healed when spring came, and no one else had been hurt. The barn was a new building, and Dan, who was eight years older than Nora, managed to make it very comfortable for their winter quarters. Of course Molly, the black cow, and Ben, the big horse, could not move that fall as they had expected to do, but were obliged to stay in the old shed.

On winter evenings when the wind blew cold and strong from out over the lake with its frozen border, Nora huddled down beside her father's chair in front of the fire and begged for stories. Then Father would say, "If only we could have saved the books!" For a little library of beloved books, the one luxury of this northland family, had been burned with the house.

"Never mind," Mother always answered. "Let us have a remembering evening!"

Sometimes it was poetry they tried to remember, and then Mother was the one



"MUFFLES" AND HER FAMILY

*Courtesy of The Farm Magazine, Omaha*

who kept ahead of all the rest. Father loved to tell over the stories of Charles Dickens; and before spring came Nora felt better acquainted with Tiny Tim and hungry Oliver Twist than with any of the children at the settlement four miles away.

Spring is late in reaching the northern edge of the United States, and the short summer months were so busy that year that there was little time to regret the lost books. There were fields to plough and gardens to make, and Father and Dan sawed and hammered and planed whenever they could find the time, so that a new home might be ready for the family before winter.

After they moved into the roughly finished little house, Dan put up some shelves in one corner of the sitting-room, and said they were for the new books that were coming some day. It was not until Christmas morning, however, that three new volumes stood proudly on the upper shelf. There was Whittier's Poems for Mother, "The Three Guardsmen" for Dan, and Nora clapped her hands when she saw "Grimm's Fairy Tales." But where was Father's book? Santa Claus had been very neglectful!

Dan and Nora talked it over that evening, whispering together in the twilight, and decided that before the next Christmas came they would find some way of buying a new set of Dickens' stories for father.

"To-morrow we will put a little box on the empty shelf," said Dan, "and pop into it through a hole in the cover all the pennies we can coax our way. In a year we should have saved enough for the books."

Nora was thinking hard. "Some of the chickens belong to me," she said, "but it takes nearly all of the egg money to buy school books. I know! Muffles is the best hen of all, and everything she earns I'll put in the box. She will lay ever so many dozen eggs in a year, and she takes such good care of her chickens that we can sell every one when they are big enough. I'll tell her to-morrow that she is to be my Dickens hen."

Muffles looked wise when she heard about Charles Dickens and the books Father liked; and she must have understood,

because every day after that she kept on calling,

"Come get your pen-ny! Come get your pen-ny! Pick it up, Pick it up, Pick it up."

until the egg was safe in Nora's apron.

Father had told Dan that he might have ground enough for a garden of his own this year, and that gave Dan his opportunity to contribute to the box. One corner of his garden he called the Dickens corner, and never were raised before such fine lettuce, radishes, and peas as grew under Dan's watchful care.

Although Muffles and the garden were devoted to the same cause, when she came to be interested in finding the most nourishing food for her young family, she had to be told more than once that this Dickens corner was not the proper hunting ground for even a Dickens hen.

Gardening is not a favorite occupation in the cold Lake Superior country, so all Dan's vegetables found a ready market at a summer hotel two miles down the shore.

To the same hotel Nora took huge bouquets of the big daisies that crowded the roadsides; and once she sold at a high price a basketful of the rare pink wild orchids which Dan found for her in one of the secret places where these dainty flowers love to hide themselves.

Busily the days passed by, Nora, Muffles, and Dan,—ladies always first!—working hard to fill up the box with pennies.

"It is so heavy, Dan," Nora would say; "don't you think there is surely enough?"

They reckoned how many days it would take to send an order to Chicago for the books, and the week before Thanksgiving the little bank was opened. Count the money over as often as they might, fifty cents was still lacking to make up the amount they needed. All the next day Nora went about with a troubled face, and that night she told Dan they must sell Muffles.

"I promised that she should be the one to help us buy the books," and Nora tried to look brave; "but, O Dan, it will be dreadful to have Muffles ki-killed and eaten after all she's done for us!" Poor Nora's sentence



ended in a wail, and Dan hugged her tight while he said: "You can sell her for Father's sake, if you want to, Nora darling, but she won't have to be killed. I heard just to-day that Mrs. McFarland up at the settlement wants to buy another good hen so that she can have plenty of fresh eggs for the little boy who is sick so much of the time."

"The little boy who is lame like Tiny Tim?" Nora brightened up to say. "Why, I believe I'd like to have Muffles live with him!"

So the Dickens hen quite appropriately became the property of Tiny Tim's namesake. The box was filled up, and Muffles escaped pot-boiling,—a fate which is dreaded by all literary workers, and one which would have been uncommonly hard on a literary hen.

For The Beacon.

### The Lily's Dream.

BY CHARLES W. CASSON.

Deep down in the black ooze of the pond there lay a lily root. Around it was the ugly tangle of the dead stalks of last summer. Above it was the cold water, and above that the cold ice, and above that the cold air of the winter.

And yet, deep down in its black bed, that lily dreamed. It dreamed of beauty of form. It dreamed of purity of life. It dreamed of living up in the sunshine of a summer's day. It dreamed of the smile on the face of a little child bent over it.

Sometimes it told its companions on the pond bottom of its dream. But the others only laughed. The log that lay beside it said, in a soggy voice: "You and I needn't hope to ever rise out of this place. Once I lived in the sunshine, and for a time I floated on the top of the water. But now I've been lying here for two summers. Stop your foolish dreaming." And the stone near by, that had been thrown into the pond by a passing boy, said about the same thing.

But the lily root dreamed and waited.

By and by there was a strange commotion overhead. The glassy ice broke into hundreds of pieces, just as if some one had struck it with a huge hammer. And presently the fragments got smaller and smaller, and at last they disappeared.

Then the lily root felt something calling it from the sunshine above. One bright sunbeam came right down through the water, and spoke to it of life and beauty and gladness. And all the other sunbeams, like a troop of bright fairies, danced on the surface of the pond.

The lily root reached out toward the brightness above. It thrust one green finger upward from the black ooze. Its whole life yearned to reach the beauty of the upper world.

But the things about it laughed again.

"Where do you think you are going?" said the log.

"Into the sunshine," replied the lily root, softly.

"O hear it!" exclaimed the little fishes, as they swam about it. "Into the sunshine! It will kill you. One of our brothers went into the sunshine, and he came back with his mouth torn so that he died."

But the lily root dreamed on of the beauty and the purity of the sunshine. Every day it reached a little higher. And one day, when the sun was just rising over the edge

of the pond, it rose to the surface and received its first smiling good morning.

There it bloomed for a week, and one day it was picked by some one in a boat. A day afterwards it looked up into the face of a little sick boy, and told him in its silent lily language of the beautiful world of nature that the little fellow had not seen for a long year.

And so at last its dream came true.

We all dream dreams of noble life and true. To every boy there comes a dream of strength and great deed and helpful life. To every girl there comes a dream of a life so sunny and bright that the world will be made better and more beautiful because she lives in it.

What shall we do with our dreams? Shall we thrust them aside, and say that they are foolish? Or shall we do as the lily did, and reach ever upward toward the brightness and the rightness of life, so that at last our dreams, too, shall come true?

### "If I Had This or That."

When Abraham Lincoln was a lad  
And lived in a hut in the wood,  
No books, no lamp, no time he had,  
And yet, it is understood,  
He trudged many miles to borrow a book.  
The light of the flickering fire he took  
And studied whenever he could.  
And none of his friends ever heard him say,

In a self-excusing and hopeless way,  
"If I had this or that, I would."

When Joan of Arc was a little maid,  
Untutored, gentle, good,  
And France was conquered and dismayed  
By England's masterhood,  
She had no wealth nor armament;  
Alone, with her faith, the little maid went  
And freed her land as she could.  
And nobody ever heard her say,  
In a listless, longing, empty way,  
"If I had this or that, I would."

When young James Watt sat by the fire  
And watched the burning wood,  
He saw the kettle's lid mount higher,  
Observed and understood;  
He had no need of a laboratory  
To plan the great steam engine's glory;  
He used his eyes as he could.  
And he never once was heard to say,  
In a shiftless, thriftless, futile way,  
"If I had this or that, I would."

If now you will read your histories o'er  
(As I earnestly think you should),  
The fact will impress you more and more,  
In the lives of the great and good;  
That they were those who never held back  
For circumstance or material lack—  
But arose and did what they could.  
And never a one was heard to say,  
In the weak, surrendering, doubting way,  
"If I had this or that, I would."

STELLA GEORGE STERN PERRY, in *St. Nicholas*.

Do not read newspapers column by column; remember they are made for everybody, and don't try to get what isn't meant for you.

EMERSON.

## RECREATION CORNER.

### ENIGMA LIV.

I am composed of 11 letters.  
My 7, 2, 6, 10, 11, is a tree.  
My 7, 4, 9, 5, is an animal.  
My 7, 2, 8, is an insect.  
My 7, 1, 9, 3, 6, is courageous.  
My whole is a delightful place in summer.  
MARY C. WHITE.

### ENIGMA LV.

I am composed of 9 letters.  
My 1, 2, 3, 4, 2, 5, is a girl's name.  
My 8, 2, 3, is a metal.  
My 8, 9, 3, is a color.  
My 6, 7, 4, is a noun.  
My whole is one of the United States.  
RUTH BOWDOIN.

### ENIGMA LVI.

I am composed of 15 letters.  
My 4, 8, 14, is a feathered fowl.  
My 10, 11, 12, 5, 3, is not small.  
My 9, 7, 10, 4, 3, is not dark.  
My 9, 2, 6, 13, is a passage.  
My 10, 1, 5, 3, is an insect.  
My 9, 7, 15, is a coward's weapon.  
My whole was a General in the Continental Army.  
CLARKE YERRINGTON.

### A CHARADE.

My *first* is a kind of a gun  
My *second*, perhaps, will enjoy;  
It furnishes plenty of fun  
For any small wide-awake boy;  
My *third's* on a dress or a hat,  
There's a kind that belongs to Queen Anne.  
There it is in your shoe, think of that!  
Sometimes on a cloak or a fan.  
My *whole* means of people, a crowd,  
Not distinguished, just common, you know;  
You may hear them shout both long and loud  
When to any mass-meeting you go.  
Youth's Companion.

### ANAGRAMS OF HOME.

What may be seen in the sitting-room of a country cottage:—

1. MARCH AIRS. 2. A BELT. 3. A FREE CLIP.  
4. NO GLUE. 5. CUP TIRES. 6. A COKE SOB. 7.  
HER HAT. 8. ROARING CHICKS. 9. URN I CAST. 10.  
ODORS. 11. V SEAS. 12. RED WING SKIT. 13.  
OATS IN POOL. 14. OWLS IN WILD. 15. TOM'S TOE.  
16. O, A NIP.

E. R. B., in *Wellspring*.

### ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NO. 28.

ENIGMA L.—The Boston Massacre.  
ENIGMA LI.—The Ladies' Home Journal.  
AN ANAGRAM STORY.—Miscreant.

## THE BEACON.

ISSUED WEEKLY FROM THE FIRST SUNDAY OF OCTOBER  
TO THE FIRST SUNDAY OF JUNE, INCLUSIVE.

Subscription price, twenty-five cents a year.

Entered as second-class mail matter, September 23,  
1910, at the post-office at Boston, Mass., under the  
Act of March 3, 1879.

PUBLISHED BY THE

UNITARIAN SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY.

REV. WILLIAM I. LAWRENCE, PRESIDENT.

25 Beacon Street, Boston.

GEO. H. ELLIS CO., PRINTERS, BOSTON